

## Lightning 351

### [Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

#### Chapter 351: Punishment Lightning

Gravis nodded. "Yes, please tell me more," he said with interest. Finally, he would know more about his homeworld.

The Opposer drank more of his coffee. "You are currently inside Opposer City. Pretty straightforward name, isn't it?" His father said with a smirk.

Gravis had never heard the name of his home city, but it actually made sense. Still, Gravis looked at his father with a complicated expression.

"Hey, don't look at me like that," his father said. "I wasn't the one who gave the city its name. No one actually intended to build this city. It just grew out of nowhere, and the name stuck. I'm a big Energy magnet, so my surroundings are the densest in regard to Energy. Therefore, a lot of people started building their own homes around ours."

'Opposer city, what a simple name,' Gravis thought with a smirk.

"Anyway, Opposer City is located in the Central Plains. As the name suggests, this is the middle of the entire world. Nearly all of the Peak Sects are located in these plains, and you can find the absolute elite of cultivators and beasts here," his father explained.

"You could compare it to the Core-Continent in your lower world. Yet, the Central Plains are much, much vaster than the entire lower world. To put it into perspective, the Central Plains are many times bigger than thousands of lower worlds combined."

"Thousands of lower worlds?" Gravis asked with shock. "The Central Plains are that huge?"

The Opposer nodded. "Similar to your lower world, the further away you go from the center, the less Energy there is. There are no barriers or anything significant between the areas, and the Energy doesn't just get cut off. It simply becomes less and less."

"You could liken the highest world to an onion. We are inside the core, but the further out you go, the more layers you will see. Just like in your lower world, the further out you go, the bigger the areas get."

"The areas outside are bigger than the Central Plains?" Gravis asked.

The Opposer nodded. "Yes. The massive size of the highest world can't be compared to any other world. The highest world has existed for the longest time, so it also had the most time to expand. On top of that, it also has, by far, the most Energy, so its expansion is also more rapid."

The Opposer scratched his chin in thought. "You could say that all other worlds combined are about just as big as the highest world."

"But aren't there billions of worlds?" Gravis asked.

The Opposer nodded again. "Yes, but that's just how vast the highest world is. The grass outside the city, for example, is the most powerful common grass that you can find. It doesn't even have Spirituality and, therefore, can also not be counted as a Spirit Plant. It's just really hard grass."

"No wonder killing the grass was so easy," Gravis said. "According to its physical power, every stalk of grass would need to be at the Unity Realm. I might be powerful in the Unity Realm, but killing thousands of cultivators in my Realm? That seems a bit too much."

"Yes. The grass has a body in the Unity Realm, but nothing else. It only acts on instincts and can't do anything else. That's also why the grass just attacked you without relenting. Every beast or Spirit Plant would have already fled from your lightning," the Opposer said.

Gravis remembered something. "Speaking of, what is this new lightning that I gained after absorbing Heaven's lightning strike, and why was I stunned when I absorbed it?" Gravis asked.

"It's Punishment Lightning," the Opposer said. "Normally, cultivators can only use it way later in their cultivation journey. That's because you need to comprehend some laws in regards to lightning to wield it."

BZZZ!

Gravis summoned a small, white ball of lightning and looked at it. "But I can use it just fine," he said.

The Opposer nodded. "Because you understand its laws."

Gravis' eyes widened. "I do?" he asked.

"Your Spirit is adapted to lightning, so it has a very deep connection to it. When you absorbed the Punishment Lightning, your Spirit started combining with it. It was like the Punishment Lightning was telling your Spirit all its secrets and what it was."

"Though," the Opposer said. "Laws are very complex, and it is a long process trying to understand them. When the lower Heaven unloaded so much lightning into you, your Spirit was overloaded with understanding. It was completely occupied and couldn't do anything else."

The Opposer scratched his chin again and looked at the ceiling. "You could compare it to one of your legs falling asleep. When your nerves get cut off for too long, they can't transmit signals back to your brain. So, when the connection gets re-established, all the nerves send their signals at once, overloading your brain and making you feel uncomfortable. Though, of course, there are still differences."

Gravis also scratched his chin in thought. Then, he looked at the, still hovering, lightning ball and thought about it. For some reason, he had a peculiar feeling towards it. It just felt like it was right and that this lightning was him.

When one tried to understand everything about themselves, it would be difficult to describe every facet of their being. It was just a feeling, and this feeling encompassed one's full understanding of themselves. The feeling Gravis had towards the lightning was similar.

He tried to explain some of the facets of his new lightning and found a lot of information that he could share. He could explain how this lightning acted, how it felt, how it would interact with different things, and many more facets. Gravis felt like he could talk about his new lightning for days.

As Gravis noticed that, he realized how much he actually knew about this new kind of lightning. He actually knew so much about it! Yet, he had never noticed it. He had only felt the feeling that the Punishment Lightning gave him but had no idea that this feeling encompassed so much knowledge.

There was a generally accepted truth about how people learned about a concept. In the beginning, the knowledge about the relevant topic was very basic and simple, and with further study, it grew more complex.

At one point, all the complex, seemingly disconnected facets of the topic would fuse together, creating one whole concept. At that point, one didn't need to learn many new things about it anymore since the concept can logically infer everything else.

If the person were asked why they thought that something in their studied topic worked a certain way, they would often just say: "Because it makes sense," or "it's logical," or "because it's obvious."

Gravis had skipped all the learning and directly reached a feeling around the whole concept of Punishment Lightning. Consciously, he felt like he knew nothing about it, but everything about it just made logical sense.

"You know," the Opposer said, pulling Gravis out of his thoughts, "this might be a bad thing. The understanding has basically been handed to you on a silver platter, and you didn't go through the trouble to understand it. It's similar to just getting your cultivation raised by a major Realm."

"Understanding new laws in the future might become more challenging than normal. That's why you must progress slowly and understand all the facets of your cultivation."

Gravis nodded. "I know," he said. "My power might be ahead of others in my Realm, but as soon as I get complacent and increase my Realm, my advantage will vanish. Those people would have honed their skills more. At that point, I would maybe only be slightly stronger. Another Realm later, I would probably be only around average."

The Opposer smiled. "It's good that you understand."

They remained silent for some seconds until Gravis remembered something. "By the way, what was that fungus that I absorbed into my Life Ring?" Gravis asked.

"That's a Common Fungus," the Opposer said. "It sounds more like a category of a fungus instead of a specific kind, but that is actually the name of the specific kind."

"Is it because this is the most common fungus that it is called Common Fungus?" Gravis asked.

The Opposer nodded.

Gravis summoned his Life Ring and looked at it. His awareness entered the Life Ring, and he saw an area hundreds of kilometers wide with some common grass. There was also some water and air, but nothing else was special about the area. It was merely the bare minimum to keep living things alive.

Yet, below the surface, Gravis felt the fungus. It was just staying underground, absorbing some nutrients and Energy. The Life Ring was absorbing the Energy in the air, and it funneled it into the Life Ring.

"Master," the fungus transmitted as soon as it felt Gravis' Spirit. Gravis was surprised that the fungus could talk with him, but he noticed that it only understood basic concepts. It was similar to the Freya's Birch in the lower world.

"In comparison to the grass," the Opposer said, regaining Gravis' attention, "this fungus is an actual Spirit Plant, or Unity Plant if you will. It has some awareness but isn't very smart. Yet, it has a hard body and a lot of Life Energy. Sadly, it's very slow and mostly lives underground. It's not useful in a fight since everyone can just run away."

"What if they don't?" Gravis asked.

The Opposer smirked. "Then it can be very troublesome since it's tough and robust. It's like that bramble bush from that clan where that little girl comes from."

Gravis was a bit confused about what his father meant, but then he realized what clan he was talking about. "The Freya Clan?" Gravis asked.

"Yeah, that was the name, I think," the Opposer said, unsure. "If cultivators attack into it, even several might die to it. It can just wear them down with its hard body and constant regeneration."

Gravis' eye shone a bit as he looked at the Life Ring. This could maybe come in handy in the future, but his father's words reminded him of something else.

"By the way, what happened to the lower world after I left?" he asked.

### [Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

#### **Chapter 352: The Lower World's Fate**

Gravis had been back in his homeworld for a little over three days. This meant that around ten years had passed in the lower world. He really wanted to know what had happened to the lower world. Would it get a new Heaven? Would it be doomed to die?

"As I said," the Opposer said, "you might be the first one that has killed a Heaven without ascending, but there have been cases of people killing a Heaven after returning from the highest world. Every world that has its Heaven destroyed gets equalized."

"Equalized?" Gravis asked, some nervousness appearing inside his voice. "That sounds ominous."

"No, it's nothing bad," the Opposer said. "The world stays heavenless. Yet, since there is no Heaven to oversee things, the world just continues running on its own without any interference."

"This means that all the Karmic Luck gets evenly distributed across all humans. The parent-Heaven also keeps up the ascension process, but that is everything that happens. Only those two things are being taken care of by Heaven. Everything else is up to the world and its inhabitants."

Gravis scratched his chin. "So, theoretically, everything can happen?"

"Yes. There is no favoritism and no higher power to stop things threatening to destroy the world. There have been worlds where techniques had been created to siphon the life out of mortals to increase one's cultivation. Due to greed, some of these worlds had the human population go extinct. If a Heaven oversaw the world, something like this would never happen."

Gravis felt some guilt inside of him. The lower world had a chance of being destroyed because of his enmity with Heaven.

"But," the Opposer said, "there have also been worlds where the general power of cultivators soared. There were also worlds where cultivation completely died out since all techniques had been lost. A world without a Heaven could become a wasteland, a paradise for mortals, a paradise for cultivators, or anything else. It depends entirely on the world."

"When one of his children dies, the old bastard just accepts it and complies. They want a world without Heaven? Sure, here you go. Then, he lets the world just take whatever course it wants. Whatever happens, happens."

Now, Gravis didn't feel so bad anymore. In actuality, he gave the world more freedom to do whatever it wanted. Whatever the world did with its newfound freedom was on them. More freedom might not result in the best results, but Gravis preferred freedom over being controlled.

Granting someone more freedom was like developing a powerful weapon. Some will use it to protect their loved ones, but others will use it to commit atrocities. It was not the weapon that killed people, but the user of said weapon.

"Are my friends still alive?" Gravis asked.

"Whom do you consider as a friend?" the Opposer asked back.

"Skye, Nero, Joyce, Lasar, Old Man Lightning, Manuel, and Aion," Gravis said.

The Opposer nodded. "Everyone is still alive," the Opposer said, making Gravis release a sigh of relief, "but that Aion fellow has it pretty rough right now."

Gravis grew a bit worried. "What happened to him?"

"Nothing that you didn't go through. The whole world is basically shunning him for being a former Heavenborn. The world is hunting him, and he is constantly on the run. Luckily, the old bastard has given him a ridiculous amount of Karmic Luck, and, with your warning, he had been able to condense a Will-Aura before the Heavenly Pressure vanished."

Gravis sighed again. "So, the highest Heaven is really preparing to make all my friends become powerful so that it can use them as hostages if I ever become a threat?" Gravis asked.

The Opposer nodded. "Possible, but that's not certain," he said.

Gravis furrowed his brows. "What do you mean?" he asked.

"The old bastard might just genuinely want to reduce your hatred towards what he had done in the past. He might have killed your closest friend in your childhood, but if he can make all your other close ones become powerful, that might count as some repayment. Honestly, I'm not sure. It could be both, either of them, or neither of them," the Opposer said.

Gravis sighed again. Not even his father knew what the highest Heaven was planning.

Whoop!

Something appeared around one of Gravis' fingers suddenly. It was the Obsidian Ring that he had lost in the lower world. "Don't lose it this time. Otherwise, you can't enter the city," the Opposer said. "In the middle world, you can just keep it inside your Spirit Space."

Gravis was a bit embarrassed that he had lost his ring. "Sorry for losing it," he said.

"No big deal. After all, you have already felt the consequences of not having it yourself," the Opposer said with a smirk.

Gravis remembered his three-day "vacation" outside the city's borders, but then, he remembered something else.

"What about the Heavenborn in the lower world?" Gravis asked.

"All dead except for Aion and some hidden spies," the Opposer said. "The Elemental Sects were pretty angry about being suppressed for so long. They hunted down nearly every single one of them. Since there is no Heavenly Pressure anymore, nearly every Heavenborn is completely helpless."

Gravis nodded. He had expected that something like this happened.

"What about Jaimy?" Gravis asked.

"Who?" asked his father.

"The guy that stabbed me in the Proxy-Lightning Guild," Gravis answered.

"Oh, that guy," his father said. "Also dead. Right after he was done with you, he fled the Guild with his younger brother. The lower Heaven saw the supreme tempering that he gave you, got mad, and annihilated them both."

Gravis nodded again. That was what he had guessed back before he went to the Core-Continent. This really fit the lower Heaven's behavior.

"What about my Research Adept emblem?" Gravis asked.

"What about it?" the Opposer asked back.

"Don't I need it to go to a middle world?" Gravis asked.

"Normally, yes," the Opposer said, "but you're my son. I'll just send you there myself. Just consider your loss of the emblem as being fired from your job. You might not get the credentials, prospects for a lucrative job, or eventual payment from it, but these things are not your goal anyway."

Gravis nodded. "I just want power to be free. With enough strength, I can have all of these things."

The Opposer smirked. "That's the right mindset."

Whoop!

The coffee vanished. "I think that covers all the topics that are not related to your cultivation?" he asked.

Gravis thought for a bit and nodded. "Yes. All my other questions are regarding my future cultivation journey."

The Opposer also nodded. "Then you should first speak with your mother before we talk about that. After all, bottled up emotions can be a distraction in cultivation. I'm not good with emotions, so I can't help you with that. Your mother is more in tune with her emotions. Talking with her will help you," he said.

Gravis' insides shivered a bit. He knew that he couldn't run from his emotions forever. He was decisive and cold when necessary, but he wasn't an emotionless machine.

Even though he didn't want to admit it, Gravis knew that many things didn't just go past him. Worry for his friends' and companions' life, Joyce's heartbroken crying, the many grieving mortals that he had created, the death of some companions, and some other things weighed on his mind.

He always shoved these worries away and focused on becoming stronger. Yet, was that the right decision in the long run? It might work out for now, but if some higher Realm required something like being in tune with oneself, this might become a problem.

His father also said that this could become a distraction. He had to confront his emotions at some point if he wanted to have a stable foundation.

Gravis stood up and looked at his father with a melancholic smile. "Thank you, father. I will go to mom now," he said.

His father nodded. "Take your time. You have been under a lot of stress for a long time. A couple of weeks or months of rest won't harm you."

Gravis nodded and left the room. The Opposer just closed his eyes and concentrated on something else. No one knew what the Opposer did all day.

After exiting the big room, Gravis sighed again. 'I wanted to visit mom first. Even though my father has supported me, I feel closer to mom. I really missed her in the lower world,' Gravis thought as he walked to his mother's room.

Without hesitation, Gravis opened the door to his mother's room.

### [Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

#### **Chapter 353: A Mother's Love**

Gravis entered the room and saw his mother directly standing in front of the door with a smile. She wore a comfortable white robe that gave her a graceful aura. Her white hair swayed in a nonexistent ethereal breeze. It was almost like her hair was underwater.

"Welcome back, Gravis," she said as she directly hugged him.

Gravis wasn't surprised that she already knew that he was back. After all, the Opposer's wife also had to be powerful. Gravis quickly returned the hug, and he felt some warmth coursing inside of him. He had always been pretty close to his mother. Sadly, she wasn't involved much in his cultivation.

"I'm home, mom," Gravis said. "I missed you."

"I missed you too," she said softly as she embraced him. A mother's love was generally more direct than a father's love, and Gravis was really happy about that. The only people he could get close to without having to worry about Heaven were his mother and father.

Joyce, Skye, and all his other friends could die at any moment. None of them were safe. Even if Heaven wanted to increase their power to use them against him in the future, it only increased their Karmic Luck. Even with Karmic Luck, people could still die. After all, every person that Gravis had ever killed had more Karmic Luck than him.

Yet, that didn't hold true for his father and mother. His mother was powerful and was also protected by his father. As long as the highest Heaven didn't manage to kill his father, his mother would also be safe, and if his father died, Gravis would probably also die very quickly. Without his father, there wouldn't be anyone to stop the highest Heaven from just directly annihilating him.

Because of this, he could forget all his worries as he hugged his mother. The fear of the emotional backlash when someone died wasn't there when he was with his parents. Like this, he could ultimately lower his emotional guard.

Though controlling one's emotions was hard. Even though he hugged his mother, he only felt some warmth course through him. Before he had left for the lower world, he had felt happy by her side. Sadly, this feeling of warmth had reduced, even though Gravis didn't want that.

Gravis felt a little guilty when his emotional response to his mother wasn't as strong as it used to be. It almost felt like his love for her had lessened. This caused him some distress.

"You're a man now, Gravis," his mother said.

Gravis slightly nodded. "Mhm," he hummed.

"Look at you," she said in happiness as she broke the hug to look at him. "Your hair color and eyes have changed. You also have a more manly and adult aura now."

She pinched Gravis' cheeks. "The girls must be going crazy for you," she said with a smirk and moved a hand through her hair. "Girls like exotic hair colors."

"Mom," Gravis said with indignance and some embarrassment. "I don't want to start a relationship yet."

His mother raised an eyebrow but still smiled. "Why not?"

Gravis sighed. "Because the chance is too high that my significant other would die."

"So?" she asked.

Gravis shook his head a bit in confusion. "What do you mean with so? Don't you understand?" he asked.

His mother slowly shook her head with a smile. "We all die. At some point, your father and I will also die. Shutting yourself away from the feeling of love just because you fear their eventual death is nonsense. What of all the mortals? They have a way shorter life, yet they still love."

Gravis released a sigh. "It's different for mortals," he said.



"No, it isn't," she said back, placing her hands on his shoulders. "Mortals have an even more fragile life than cultivators. Bandits, wild beasts, disease, cultivators, wars, battle, famine, and many other things can kill them or their loved ones at any time. If everyone were afraid of the pain that much, we wouldn't have any more humans."

"Yes, you're right, but I'm not required to have a child," Gravis explained.

"Hmmm," his mother hummed while tapping her chin with her slender and long fingers. "That's true," she said, "but people don't get into relationships because they need to make children. They do it because they love each other," his mother explained.

Gravis released a shaky sigh. "And what do I get out of love?" he asked.

His mother shook her head and walked over to her bed to sit down. Then, she patted her lap for him to sit down.

When Gravis saw that, he felt more embarrassed. Sometimes, he thought that his mother got a little too carried away in her role. "Mom, I'm bigger and heavier than you," he said.

"Oh, come on," she said with a pout. "You were always happy when you could sit in my lap."

"Yeah, when I was like ten. I'm 22 now," he said unamused.

His mother shook her head again.

Whoop!

Gravis reappeared on the bed without him noticing. In no time, he saw himself laying on his back, his head on his mother's lap. Gravis immediately wanted to shoot up out of embarrassment, but his mother slowly pushed his head back down.

"Hey, no one's watching. You don't need to act all tough and prideful in front of me. I'm your mother, and if you don't want to do it for yourself, do it for me, okay?" she said slowly.

Gravis released a sigh but let his head lay on her lap.

"Look at how dirty your hair is. Aren't cultivators supposed to be clean?" she said with mock frustration as she went through his hair with her fingers.

Gravis wasn't sure what she was talking about. "My hair isn't dirty," he said.

His mother sighed helplessly. "You might not notice, but other girls will. It's not just dirt that makes something dirty. You have knots in your hair, and it has grown wild without any reason or pattern. It just looks like you didn't touch your hair in forever," she said, criticizing his hair.

Gravis thought back as his mother was fixing his hair. "I think I've never touched my new hair before."

"Pff," his mother snorted, "no wonder it's this messy! I'm going to fix it in no time!" she said with a motivated smile.

Gravis sighed again. "What's the point of that? Looking good doesn't really help me in my journey," he said.

His mother shook her head again. "It might not, but it feels good to look good. It has something to do with self-confidence and having self-respect. After all, it's your body, and it's a part of you. You might pride yourself in your smarts and your will, but why not also pride yourself in your body?"

"Well, my smarts and will help me in cultivation. Looking good doesn't help," Gravis said.

"And what's the goal of your cultivation?" she asked, still fixing his hair. She snipped off a lot of hair with her fingernails. A scissor or blade wasn't necessary. As someone in the Unity Realm, Gravis' hair was powerful enough that a single strand could lift many tons, but his mother had no issue in clipping it.

"To gain freedom," Gravis answered. After putting away his embarrassment, he started to feel way calmer. There was something inside of him that radiated a calm energy, like the gentle waves of a lake.

"And what do you get from freedom?" she asked.

Gravis furrowed his brows. Wasn't freedom the reward in and of itself? "I don't get what you mean," he said.

"I'm asking what you're getting out of freedom. Why do you want freedom?" she asked again.

"Because I don't want my loved ones or myself to die," he said.

"But if you don't have loved ones, except for your father and me, of course, what's the point of freedom?" she asked with a smile.

Gravis furrowed his brows a bit. "When I have freedom, I can search for people that I care about," he said.

His mother sighed. "Yes, but will you find them?" she asked.

For some reason, Gravis felt a bit nervous. "What do you mean?"

His mother looked a bit sadder now. "When you have lived thousands, millions, or billions of years alone, will you still be able to feel love? At that point, you will still know the concept of love, but can you actually feel love?"

Gravis' insides shook a bit. Was that a possibility?

"I also noticed your reaction when we hugged," his mother said, making Gravis feel nervous. "Even after not seeing me for six years, you were still happy to see me, but you also felt more distant. It was almost like I was a stranger to you," she said. By now, she had fixed his hair and just caressed his forehead.

"I'm sorry, mom," Gravis said with a shaky voice.

"Hey, don't worry," she said, "I understand. You haven't seen me for six years, so, of course, you'll feel estranged. It's normal. But that's what I'm trying to show you. You already feel estranged after only six years. How will you feel after thousands?" she asked.

Gravis wasn't sure how to answer.

"If you don't want your goal to feel empty and pointless, you need to learn how to love again. Imagine the time when Heaven dies, and you're finally free. What then? What will you do then?" she asked.

Gravis' thought about this for a while, but it was very difficult to find an answer.

"I don't know," he said.

### [Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

#### **Chapter 354: The Opposer's Past**

Some seconds passed in silence.

"That's the thing," his mother continued, "When you become the most powerful cultivator, you won't have any enemies left and no goal. No one can threaten you, so, what now? What's the purpose of becoming even more powerful?"

Gravis released another shaky breath. "It feels lonely," he said.

His mother nodded. "It is lonely," she said, and then she furrowed brows. "Gravis, I'm going to tell you some things about your father and me. Your father won't be happy, but he'll just have to deal with it," she said.

Gravis also furrowed his brows. "Isn't that bad?" he asked.

His mother snorted. "So what? He's the strongest and is already going rampant in the whole world, but what about it? Life isn't an easy road where you never get hurt and always get whatever you want. Your father should know that. He'll just have to suck it up this time," she said with a smirk.

Gravis was a bit astonished at first but then chuckled. "I guess not even father is safe from you," he said.

"He sure isn't," his mother said with a smile, "people have different outlooks and priorities. Your father looks at the world differently from me, but so what? Am I supposed to follow your father's every word? I'm my own person, after all," she said.

Gravis closed his eyes. "Okay, tell me," he said.

"Your father has had a rough life. Similar to you, he put strength above everything else and let no one come close to him," she started explaining. "After many, many years, he was finally the strongest and was able to resist Heaven, but what then? Heaven was the first enemy that he couldn't defeat, no matter how much time passed or how strong he got."

Gravis remained silent as his mother told his father's story.

"One could say that your father already has freedom. He can basically do whatever he wants. Heaven isn't against most things. It only wants to keep the cultivators cultivating and, even though people say something different, he isn't a heartless slaughterer. He doesn't just kill people without reason. So, Heaven is not in your father's way."

"Heaven is even happy about our growing family, more powerful cultivators, and such. Your father can do whatever he wants, but what now? What can he do now that he is at the peak? He still strives to beat his last enemy, but when he accomplishes that, he will have no more goals left."

"Imagine living for billions of years without a goal. You just keep on living with no dream or desire remaining. What's the point of this life? You just see millions of years pass, yet it just felt like a moment.

Nothing excites you anymore, and nothing will stay in your memory since it has no impact on you anymore."

Gravis sighed. "That's a sad life. Luckily, my father has us," Gravis said.

His mother's hand stopped caressing, and Gravis opened his eyes to look at her. Right now, she had a worried frown on her face. "What is it?" he asked.

"Yes, he has us, but is that really relevant if he doesn't feel anything for us?" she asked.

Gravis grew even more nervous when he heard that. "But he does," he said.

His mother sighed. "Do you remember when I told you that you might forget how to love? I wasn't making a hypothetical then. Your father had forgotten how to love for a long time," she said.

Gravis jerked up into a sitting position, looking at his mother in shock. "Could you elaborate?" he asked, nervously.

His mother's furrowed brows didn't leave her face. "You're an adult now, so I can tell you these things," his mother said, not making Gravis any calmer. "How do you think your father and I met?" she asked.

"I don't know. I imagine that you were some peerless talent from some Sect or something?" Gravis asked. This slow explanation made him feel anxious.

His mother shook her head. "Your father and I didn't know each other before he became as powerful as Heaven," his mother sighed, "In actuality, I didn't even exist back then."

"So, you were born later?" Gravis asked.

His mother sighed again. "I was born some time after your father and Heaven have concluded their fight. This was the most tragic fight in history. In order to suppress your father, Heaven needed all the Energy it could get, so it converted everything in the world into Energy," she said.

Gravis' eyes widened. He knew what that meant. "Everything?"

His mother nodded. "Everything. Every plant, animal, human, cultivator, land, sea, everything was converted into Energy. After their fight, the world was only an empty, lifeless husk of its former self."

Gravis looked down at the ground. This sounded so unreal. "So, father and Heaven were the last things that remained?" he asked.

His mother nodded. "Yes, they were the only two beings that were left. Your father and Heaven had been exhausted from the fight, and only a small part of their Energy remained. At that point, either both of them would die, or none of them. After a talk, they decided to stop the fight."

"Yet, your father was still happy that he had achieved his goal. He wouldn't be suppressed by Heaven anymore, but when he saw the lifeless emptiness, he felt his goal to be empty. Nothing remained. What now?" his mother continued explaining, and Gravis also felt sad for his father.

Such a situation felt just tragic. The lifelong goal that he had chased only left a feeling of emptiness.

"So, your father left the world to search the Chaos Void for any other life. He searched for around 50 million years, but he never found anything. There was just nothing. At that point, he returned to our world," she said.

"After returning, he saw a world filled with life again, but it was different. The humans felt different and were weaker. After all, they hadn't even discovered cultivation back then. After seeing the whole world get destroyed and reborn, he started feeling a disconnect to life. Was there even a point to life if it could get destroyed and reborn like nothing had ever happened?"

"I don't know the reason behind it, but after your father returned, Heaven did something," she said, but then paused.

Gravis saw her eyes looking towards his father's room. On top of that, she was frowning like she was annoyed. She was obviously talking with his father. But, after some seconds, her frown changed into a victorious smile. Then, she looked back at Gravis. "Where was I?"

Gravis felt anxious about his father's interruption. This didn't seem to fit his demeanor at all. Usually, he let things just happen, but this time, he had actually involved himself. What had Heaven done back then that it had elicited an interruption by his father?

"You said that Heaven did something after father returned," Gravis said, gulping involuntarily.

"Oh, right," his mother said. "I don't know the reason, but Heaven decided to accommodate your father. So, to give his life meaning, it created a perfectly compatible and powerful person to stay by his side," she said.

Gravis' eyes widened.

"That person was me," she said.

### [Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

#### **Chapter 355: Emptiness**

Gravis felt like time stopped. Heaven had created his mother? What did this mean? Why? "You're a Heavenborn?" Gravis asked in shock.

His mother tapped her chin. "You could call me that," she said nonchalantly like it wasn't a big deal. "Heaven created me to be as compatible with your father as possible. In the beginning, your father wasn't very thrilled with me. He just thought that this was another one of Heaven's schemes."

Gravis couldn't wrap his head around this fact. So many moral conflicts and implications appeared with that fact. "Were you also created to love him?" he asked, fearing the answer.

His mother nodded. "Of course. We were perfectly compatible with each other. So, I quickly fell in love with your father."

This was the answer that Gravis feared. The fact that his parents didn't meet or fall in love naturally made a lump appear inside his chest. This didn't feel like love. It felt more artificial than that. "And you never questioned these feelings, fearing that they have been instilled by someone else?"

"Oh, I did, trust me on that," his mother said. "I was unhappy, angry, and hated my life. It didn't feel like I was my own person. It felt more like I was a tool that had been created just to please someone else. I hated that feeling," she said.

"I stayed like that for a long time and mostly spent my time with the mortals. I have built a lot of relationships with them, but I always felt sad when they died of old age. In the beginning, our times together felt like an eternity, but as more time passed, their lives just seemed to become shorter and shorter."

"Back then, your father and I talked a lot. He was the only constant in my life. On top of that, I just didn't feel any love for any other man or woman. They all felt so fragile and distant. It was like we were living in different worlds."

"After a long time of talking, we became closer. Just like today, he always seemed to be busy with something and just sat inside his room, frowning all the time. His demeanor might not seem different from today, but I felt the difference. It felt like your father was lost," she said.

Gravis gulped again. "And even though Heaven created you to fall in love with each other, you just went along with it?" Gravis asked.

His mother sighed. "I guess we both felt lost. I felt isolated from the mortals, and your father felt isolated from everything. Except for Heaven, we were the only two constants. We always were there and stayed the same. I fell into thought for a long time, just thinking about my life, emotions, and life in general."

"So, after a long time of thinking, I came to a conclusion," she said.

"Which is?" Gravis asked.

"Emotions are necessary to give life meaning when you have nothing else to strive for," she said. "You might believe that you are above such emotions, but your emotions are part of who you are. They drive you forward when you have no goal."

"Also, the want for freedom is also a kind of emotion. You just place it above any other one. Yet, if that want disappears, you need a backup to fall back on. I think feeling happy is the goal of everyone. Whatever emotion or circumstance creates this happiness is different for everyone, but basically, being happy is everyone's goal."

"If your dependent emotion for happiness vanishes, you need a different one to give your life meaning. The desire to reach supreme power won't ever be fulfilled for nearly everyone, so, with their goal in mind, they could strive for happiness for their entire lives, but that's because they can never reach it."

"It's like the saying that one bread can feed you for your entire life, but that's because, without more food, your entire life won't be very long. The desire for power follows everyone until the day they die because they will never reach supreme power."

His mother smiled, "but you have an actual shot of becoming supremely powerful. Yet, if you bank everything on this one desire, achieving your goal will only leave emptiness behind. In my opinion, betting all their happiness onto supreme power means that they have already committed to never achieving it. After all, if you do reach it, only emptiness or death remains."

Gravis listened intently, reflecting on his own desires.

"I realized these things back then. So, I decided that I wanted to be happy. I loved your father, and even though these desires might appear artificial, I'll follow them. I don't want to die or live an empty life. It felt like I lost to Heaven's schemes, but so what? Losing isn't so bad. You can learn a lot of things by losing something," she explained.

Gravis actually admired his mother. It surely wasn't easy to give in to what Heaven wanted. Gravis felt like he wouldn't be able to do that. Something inside of him just didn't want to give Heaven any victory, no matter how small it was.

Yet, wasn't his mother happy now? Of course, his father's words also returned. "But didn't Heaven create emotions like love to push people to power? Following this feels manipulative," he said.

His mother tapped her chin again. "Honestly, I'm not so sure about that," she said.

Gravis lifted an eyebrow. "What do you mean?" he asked.

"It's like when you really dislike someone. You see that person commit a mistake and automatically think that this person is stupid, but if one of your friends made the same mistake, you would say that humans make mistakes and that it's normal. We automatically assume the worst of the people we dislike and often ignore their positives."

"What if Heaven had been entirely different when it had created this world? What if it only wanted to create a happy world with love and closeness? Maybe it felt empty and wanted to see what people would make of these emotions? Maybe it wanted to grant the people a chance to decide their own happiness?" she asked.

"Imagine a world completely without emotions. We would only strive for our own survival and die at some point, but with enough intelligence and wisdom, we would realize how senseless this life was. What's the point of living? After all, we'll only die in the end."

Gravis thought about these words. Was it possible that Heaven hadn't created emotions just to force people to get stronger? What if Heaven really had been different back then? Gravis noticed that his mother had said that Heaven might have been different in the past. This meant that she acknowledged that Heaven seemed cold and selfish right now.

If she said that Heaven currently was different, he wouldn't believe her. That just seemed delusional. Yet, by acknowledging Heaven's current conduct, it actually opened up new possibilities for the past. People change. So, Heaven could maybe also change?

Yet, Gravis realized that the most pressing question still hadn't been answered. "You said that father might not love us," Gravis said, bringing the original topic back.

His mother remembered that this had been the starting point of everything. "Ever since we got together, your father tried to regain his love. I helped him along the way, but it just seemed impossible for him. After a long time, he started believing that it was impossible for him to ever love again."

"Yet, he still tried against all hope. We created a family, grew bigger and bigger, and the world recovered. Sadly, with a bigger world, danger also returned to cultivators. At some point, the cultivators became powerful enough to fight our children evenly," she explained.

"You know your father, and you know that he values fairness. If one of your siblings died in a fair fight, he wouldn't stop it. Your father tried to feel love again, but when he felt the pain of his children dying, it became even more difficult to open up. After all, no one wants to feel the pain of having a loved one die. Ever since then, we have been working on that," she said.

Now, Gravis understood what his mother meant. It wasn't that his father didn't love him, but that he couldn't. Yet, what of his sacrifice when Gravis reached the Spirit Forming Realm? Also, he had felt his love when he had been with him previously.

"I think you're wrong, mom," Gravis said.

His mother only smirked. "No, I'm not," she said with a small laugh, which didn't fit the atmosphere. "I didn't say that your father doesn't feel anything, but that he hadn't felt anything. It's past tense," she said.

Gravis' eyes widened, and he felt anticipation. "What do you mean?"

His mother laughed again. "It's you," she said. "About five days ago, when you broke into the Spirit Forming Realm, your situation forced your father to decide between being emotional or emotionless. Just imagine it. On one side was the death of his only remaining enemy while on the other was the life of his son."

His mother smiled warmly and happily. "At that point, he had realized his own feelings. He couldn't bring himself to sacrifice you. Why was that? It was because he loved you. You might not realize this, but you have created an unprecedented storm inside your father's heart."

"Me?" Gravis said incredulously, pointing dumbly at himself.

"Yes, you," his mother said with a laugh. "Your father has truly opened up for the first time. It made him realize that he wasn't a hopeless case. After realizing his own love for you, he finally felt something. You have helped your father more than you could ever imagine," she said, poking Gravis in the side.

### [Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

#### **Chapter 356: Letting Go**

"I... helped my father?" Gravis asked unbelievably.

Who was his father? His father was the most powerful being in all the worlds, except for Heaven. He had been a constant monolith, unchangeable, and unstoppable by everything. Gravis' power was so far away from him that helping him seemed like a distant dream. It hadn't even been a possibility in his mind.

Yet, everything that his mother had said made sense. Gravis was an adult, and he could understand these emotions in more clarity. Many younger people might feel betrayed by the fact that their father hadn't loved them or their siblings in the beginning. Yet, wasn't his father also a victim of circumstance?



Not everything in the world went smoothly, and often enough, there were bitter truths. Gravis had gone through enough pain to realize this. Having a perfect family was basically impossible. Everyone had their issues. Overcoming these issues was what made a family as perfect as possible.

"Yes, you helped your father," his mother said, pulling him into a hug again, "and I'm really proud of you."

Gravis was still a bit stunned, but he returned his mother's embrace. This time, it felt even better than before. Hearing her talk about his father's past and Gravis' possible future allowed him to let go of some of his previous inhibitions.

Yet, by letting go of his emotional control, he involuntarily felt a lump inside his throat again. He started thinking back about what had happened in the lower world.

He remembered the pain he had been in when he was forced to deny every relationship with the people he met in the Outer-Continent. He remembered the loneliness and emptiness he had felt when he had tempered his skin for the first time.

He remembered Gorn's death. He remembered how he had been forced to kill the disciples of the Lightning Guild, which he felt indebted to, if he didn't want to die. He remembered the time when he had felt isolated from everything and everyone while staying inside the Heaven Sect.

He remembered the death of Wendy and how he had chosen power above emotions. He remembered being forced to abandon Skye for her own good. He remembered Saron, Wendy's father, and how he had died after helping Gravis.

He remembered his parting with Aion. He remembered Byron's betrayal after Gravis believed that he finally had a group he could belong to. He remembered the death of Skye's parent. He remembered how he had involuntarily caused the death of thousands of beasts and cultivators by giving the Lightning Sect Destruction Lightning.

He remembered his parting with Old Man Lightning and Lasar. He remembered how Heaven had constantly suppressed him. He remembered how Claude had died when Gravis chose his opponent. He remembered the apocalypse he had brought while fighting Heaven.

He remembered Joyce's heartbroken tears before he left. He remembered the uncertain futures of his companions. He remembered Skye's departure to a different world.

On his journey until now, there had been a lot of pain and worry. Many of his close ones had died while the future of the other ones was uncertain.

He felt sadness for his dead companions.

He felt guilt for the lives he had involuntarily destroyed.

He felt worried about his companions.

Gravis remained silent, but his insides were shaking. He gulped a couple of times out of nervousness. He always believed that everything was natural and that he had accepted the cold reality of the world.

But was that true? Did he really feel nothing?

Gravis was not an emotionless machine. He felt sad when he lost someone dear to him. He grew angry when someone threatened the people close to him. He was worried about his close ones.

Gravis was a human, and he felt emotions. People often associated emotionlessness with strength, but that was only true when it was necessary. When emotions became a hindrance, shutting them off helped, but that couldn't be kept up forever without lasting damage.

Gravis had realized by now that by always swallowing the pain, he was transforming his colorful life into a grey void.

Yet, pain was difficult to accept. Humans didn't want to feel pain, and most humans felt that emotional pain was worse than physical pain.

Displays of emotions were a sign of weakness for many, but wasn't that because they were afraid of confronting their own feelings? Being strong when it was necessary was strength, but it was also strength to confront one's own inner demons and pain.

Always hiding the pain away was like sweeping the dirt under the rug. On the surface, it appeared clean, but deep beneath, there was still dirt. At some point, it would become just too much.

"You've gone through a lot," his mother said warmly. "I'm not able to watch, like your father, but he has shown me everything. I know how difficult it is to lose someone close to you. I know how it is to fear for your friends."

"You're not an emotionless machine," she said. "I could feel your pain through your father's telling of what was happening to you."

They remained silent for some seconds, just hugging each other.

"Let it out," his mother said. "Let me help you with your pain. No one is watching, and there is no one that you need to be strong for. Even with the pain, your will is powerful enough to continue. You know that this pain won't stop you in your path. You know that you can still be cruel when it's necessary."

"But when you release it," his mother said warmly, "you also know how to be warm when it's necessary."

Some more seconds passed as Gravis' body shivered.

"I miss them," Gravis said quietly. "I miss Joyce, Skye, Nero, Manuel, Lasar, the old man, Aion. I'm afraid I'll never see them again," Gravis said in a whisper.

His mother remained silent.

"I don't know what to do," Gravis said in a shaking voice. "I say that emotions are only a weakness, but yet, I am unable to shut them off. I try to believe that the pain just helps me to grow more powerful, and it does, but that doesn't mean that I like pain. I don't want to feel pain."

His mother still remained silent.

"But, the world has become greyer as time passed. I felt less pain, but I also felt less happiness. No matter what I do, I only see pain or grey emptiness."

"So what if you feel pain?" his mother said. "It hurts, but only for a while. After that, it slowly vanishes. What's the harm in confronting it? Pain only stays for a limited time, but the grey nothingness stays forever."

Gravis remained silent for half a minute. He had made his decision, and he would go through with it!

He let go of everything. Tears formed in his eyes, and he hugged his mother with all his power.

"I don't want to be alone!" he screamed.

And with that, Gravis broke down.

### [Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

#### **Chapter 357: Alternative Cultivation**

Gravis spent two whole weeks with his mother, just talking about everything. He had needed this breather and talk. He had confronted his emotions and had accepted the pain. By now, he felt much better, and he also felt like a constant pressure, which he hadn't noticed before, had disappeared.

Laughing came way easier, and it also felt deeper. When he thought back on his journey in the lower world, it felt to him like it was in his distant past. It felt like this had been done by a younger him, even though he had still been there two weeks ago.

He accepted the deaths that he had caused, but this wouldn't stop his path. He didn't want to hurt innocent people, but he accepted that this was just a reality of becoming powerful. Sometimes, even if he didn't want to hurt or kill them, it just happened because of something that he was doing.

Gravis wasn't some saint that wanted to keep the world pure. He just wanted to achieve his goal. If he could avoid it, he wouldn't implicate others, but that couldn't always be avoided. Gravis felt his path to power to be as clear and stable as never before. He would reach his goal, no matter what it took!

He also thought about all the pain he had caused by fighting Heaven. Yet, if Gravis knew what his fight would have brought, he would have still gone through with it. His enmity with Heaven was more important to him.

After his long talk with his mother, Gravis visited his brother Orpheus. In comparison to his parents, Orpheus didn't know anything about Gravis' journey in the lower world, so he was very interested in Gravis' story.

Gravis told his story to his brother, and Orpheus listened with bated breath. He said that a lot of things had been similar to his journey in his lower world, but there were also a lot of differences.

When Orpheus had visited his lower world, he only had to deal with his lack of Karmic Luck. The Heaven of that world didn't go after him. This made his journey still difficult, but not nearly as much as Gravis'.

Heaven basically had all the power in the world, so it had been able to send stuff at Gravis that he shouldn't have been able to deal with. A good example of that was Aion's visit to Proxy-Lightning Guild or the way more powerful lightning disciples at the tree.

When one only looked at the numbers, one would come to the conclusion that Gravis would die. Yet, he had managed to squirm his way out of these situations. These situations hadn't required a powerful combat strength, but intelligence.

If Gravis hadn't been able to simulate a Heavenly Pressure so well, Aion would have killed him, and if he hadn't kept an additional beast corpse ready, the lightning disciples would have killed him. Another such incident was Aion's meeting with Gravis at the Wind Wall. If Gravis hadn't planned everything beforehand, he would have also died then.

Strength was the most important thing, but if one didn't have enough strength, they needed to find something else that allowed them to turn the tide. Luckily, Gravis had the required intelligence.

The fight against elder Red and the priest from the Heaven Sect had been especially hard. In both cases, Gravis had a way higher chance of dying than surviving. Only his creativity with his power allowed him to win against these two opponents.

If Gravis told these things to others, they initially might not believe him. It just seemed to be too insane. Yet, his powerful Will-Aura gave credibility to his tales. If Gravis didn't survive so many mortal dangers, he wouldn't have such a powerful Will-Aura.

Orpheus especially praised Gravis' Will-Aura. He said that it was the most powerful one he had ever seen in relation to his Realm. Though, the circumstances of the lower and highest world also played a part in that.

In the lower world, everyone only tempered themselves enough to achieve ascension. Why would there be a reason to risk their lives further if the peak of power, which they could comprehend, was already in reach?

In comparison, cultivation in the highest world was way faster. Due to the abundance of resources and Energy, people stayed inside their Realms for shorter periods of time. On top of that, Orpheus told Gravis something else about the highest world that surprised him quite a bit.

Apparently, not all cultivation paths required a Will-Aura. There was a mountain of techniques that bypassed the Will-Aura requirement, allowing people to reach a higher Realm way sooner. Additionally, many of the cultivation techniques also bypassed the resting period for tempering someone's Spirit.

Orpheus told Gravis that the path of requiring a Will-Aura was called the Will Forging Path. It was the most original path and also the first one. People that didn't follow that path had basically no bottlenecks for the first five Realms.

Going through the Body Tempering Realm was easy since it only required resources. Same thing with the Energy Gathering Stage. With different cultivation techniques, people could also convert resources into tempering for their Spirits.

After that, they had a powerful body, a powerful dantian, and a powerful Spirit. Thus, achieving Unity also wasn't an issue. After all, the cultivation techniques bypassed the need for a Will-Aura.

Apparently, there were many Unity Realm cultivators that didn't even reach the age of ten. They were simply just kids that had been pumped full of resources. This seemed unreal to Gravis. There were small kids out there that were in the same Realm as him?

Reaching the Nascent Nourishing Realm was, of course, also not hard for these children. It only needed time and resources. But after that, the required background for the kids became higher.

In order to reach the next Realm, they needed to understand some things about the laws. Something like that couldn't be solved with resources. On top of that, the kids, who had not achieved much by themselves, had not nearly enough experience with the world and their own power to grasp something as elusive as laws.

The only way to make them grasp the laws was to teach them slowly. Of course, different kids had different affinities for different things. So, they couldn't just learn any law. It had to fit perfectly with them. So, they needed a teacher that grasped these specific laws. Finding such a teacher was difficult and expensive.

The further the kids progressed, the harder it was to help them. At one point, there was basically nothing that anyone could do. This meant that these people would never achieve another breakthrough again.

They could theoretically temper themselves for a ridiculous amount of time to get back to the same level as someone that went through the Will Forging Path, but there was an issue. Tempering required genuine danger. The family had already invested so many resources, so it was impossible for these cultivators to temper themselves. Their family or organization wouldn't allow it.

Of course, the good came with the bad. These people had an easy way to a relatively high Realm, but they were very inexperienced in fights. On top of that, the lack of a Will-Aura made them especially weak to one.

Orpheus told Gravis that with his current Will-Aura and Realm, he could completely immobilize one of these cultivators in the middle Stage of the Nascent Nourishing Realm. This was a jump of one and a half major Realms, and it wouldn't even be a fight!

Of course, there were some very elusive methods that allowed people to even become immortals, but that required a very powerful background. One shouldn't forget that even the Opposer couldn't make someone become more powerful than the Immortal Emperor Realm. Anyone else wouldn't even be able to push someone to that Realm.

The Opposer was the only person that could make people reach the Immortal Emperor Realm. Everyone else was stuck in the Immortal Realm. There was one Realm between an Immortal and Immortal Emperor, and it was called the Immortal King Realm.

Only people in the publicly accepted highest Realm in the highest world could make someone reach it. These were the rulers, hegemony, and deities of the highest world. They controlled everything.

Of course, that was if one ignored Gravis' father.

On top of that, there basically didn't exist anyone that had been pushed into the Immortal King Realm. The strongest people with the highest Realm wouldn't be interested in someone like that, so why should they make someone reach that Realm?

Because of these things, the practically strongest Realm achievable for people not following the Will Forging Path was the Immortal Realm. At that point, they would be completely stuck.

After talking about this topic, Orpheus also told him his Realm.

Orpheus was a Star God.

Orpheus also joked about the fact that there currently were fewer Star Gods than the Realm coming after that. After all, the Opposer had killed all living Star Gods two years ago. Of course, the Opposer wouldn't just kill his own children. That's why Orpheus was now in one of the rarest Realms.

Orpheus also told him that he was the third strongest of all their siblings. His power was also the reason why he was in such a high position inside his company.

"Speaking of our siblings," Gravis said. "Do they still not want to meet me?" he asked, unamused. Back then, he had thought that their conduct had been understandable, but not anymore. His siblings were running from possible pain. Now, this seemed weak to him.

When Orpheus heard that, he sighed. "Well, I might not have told you the whole truth," he said.

Gravis lifted an eyebrow. "Yes?" he asked slowly.

"Yes, a lot of them don't want to meet you because of your risk of death, but that's only about 10% of our siblings," he explained.

"And the others?" Gravis asked.

"Well, when you have so many siblings, the feeling of family kind of vanishes. We are related by blood, but most of us don't care about our family," he said.

### [Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

#### **Chapter 358: Melody**

Gravis was first a bit surprised, but after thinking about it for some seconds, he realized that it actually made sense. How big was his family? On top of that, how long did his siblings live? For the first five to fifteen births, a sibling might be interested, but after that?

At some point, it was just more of the same. At the same time, there wasn't much that connected them to their parents. Yes, the first couple of hundred years, they might still feel a connection to their parents, but after that?

One had to remember that most of his siblings had been raised to the Immortal Emperor Realm by his father. They would have their own families already, and the restriction of visiting their father only a couple of times could also estrange them.

They would visit their father and mother, and nothing would have changed. His father continued sitting in his room while his mother also rarely left. His parents had lived for an incredibly long time. They had basically seen everything there is to see, so there was not much excitement for traveling.

"Huh, that actually makes more sense," Gravis said.

Orpheus sighed. "Sorry that I didn't tell you sooner."

"No, I get it," Gravis said. "I was young, and that my family didn't care about me would have hit me pretty hard."

Orpheus drank more of his own coffee. Gravis wasn't really interested in Orpheus' coffee, so he was the only one drinking. "But you don't care anymore, do you?" Orpheus asked with a smile.

Gravis slowly shook his head. "It makes sense, and I'm not a child anymore. If there is no love or companionship, the only thing that connects family is their blood, and what is that worth? I'm not angry at them, because I think the same. Why should I feel the need to visit my siblings that don't care about me? That would be just an uncomfortable situation for both of us," Gravis explained.

Orpheus sighed again. "Don't think too badly of them. Many of them still keep in touch with our parents. It's just that many of them have been desensitized to their growing family. Our family is less like a family and more like a Clan."

"Though, the difference to a normal Clan is that we don't share the same troubles and living space. Bad experiences connect people," Orpheus explained.

Gravis only nodded.

"Let's change the topic," Orpheus said. "So, you're going to a Natural World next?" he asked.

Gravis furrowed his brows. "No, why would I? I'm more interested in the Battle Techniques of a Battle World."

Orpheus was confused for a second but then realized something. "Oh," he said slowly. "You didn't talk to father about your cultivation yet?" he asked slowly.

Gravis felt like something was up. "No, I didn't," he said.

Orpheus laughed a bit. "Seems like I took away some of the surprise, but I'm sure father won't mind," he said while taking another sip from his coffee.

Gravis looked skeptically at Orpheus. "And I'm guessing you don't want to explain that to me?" he asked.

Orpheus shook his head with a smile. "Father would explain it better. So, just be prepared for a surprise regarding your cultivation when you talk to him."

Gravis smirked a bit. "Alright. I don't have a problem with surprises. They make life more colorful," he said.

Orpheus also nodded, and they remained silent for some seconds. After that, Orpheus smiled again. "Can you show me?" he asked.

"Show what?" Gravis asked.

Orpheus snorted. "I want to see Heaven's body," he said with a friendly tone, but Gravis heard the excitement in his voice. "I've never seen a Heaven before."

Gravis also smiled. "Sure," he said.

Whoop!

A one-meter-long black worm filled with eyes appeared on the table. Orpheus looked at it with interest. "Wow, it looks completely different than I've imagined," he said. "I thought they would be more humanlike."

Gravis put the body back into his Spirit Space. "I thought the same thing. Their conduct is very humanlike, and they mostly only care about humans. I expected them to have a similar body to us, but apparently, that's not true."

Orpheus scratched his temple in thought. "I wonder if all Heaven's look like this or if it's only the lower Heavens."

"What do you mean?" Gravis asked.

"Well, what if this is only a child version of Heaven? After all, the lower worlds are the weakest. It could be that this is only a child," he said.

Gravis thought about this for a while. "Possible, but I'm not sure. Though, it was acting a bit child-like."

After that, the topic changed about some other things, but the most important things had already been discussed. Yet, there was one last surprise.

"By the way," Orpheus said, "Did you know that father lifted the rule that we can only visit him once per century about a week ago? I was really surprised about that," he said.

Gravis was also a bit surprised but quickly realized why. His father had finally realized some of his feelings, and growing closer to his children might help. Though, Gravis didn't tell Orpheus. Realizing that one of their parents had never loved them is a hard blow. It was up to his mother and father to tell them.

Orpheus noticed Gravis' change in expression. "You know something," he commented.

Gravis nodded. "Yes, but I shouldn't be the one to tell you why. You should ask father when you visit him. It's his reason to tell," Gravis said.

Orpheus snorted. "Great. First, I keep you in the dark about your cultivation surprise, and now you keep me in the dark. Guess I deserved it," he said with a laugh and drank more of his coffee.

Instead of smirking, Gravis only sighed. Orpheus wanted to lighten the mood, but this topic wasn't a light one.

Of course, Orpheus also noticed that Gravis didn't go along with his joke, which made him furrow his brows. Apparently, the reason was not so simple.

After they talked some more, Gravis left. It was about time that he spoke to his father about his cultivation. Though, a surprise waited for him when he came home.

"You should wait for a bit. Your father is currently talking to one of your sisters," his mother transmitted to him.

Gravis was a bit surprised but shrugged. "Sure," he said and leaned against the wall beside the door. He only had to wait until they finished talking.



Like this, Gravis waited for about ten minutes until the doors opened.

Out of the door stepped a beautiful, young-looking woman. Of course, with her powerful cultivation, one couldn't tell her age just by appearance. She wore a lot of jewelry and magnificent robes that radiated a kind of calm aura. All in all, she appeared to be a loving and kind woman.

"Tch," she spat with a sneer when she left, and just like that, all of Gravis' goodwill had evaporated. That disgusted sneer of hers had completely destroyed the calm and friendly image. She actually had some amazing guts to sneer like this after talking with their father. She should know that their father saw this.

This could only mean that she didn't care about what their father thought of her. Gravis immediately realized that she was one of his siblings that didn't care about family. Imagine not seeing your father for one hundred years and then leaving with such a disgusted sneer.

Well, if his father did something horrible, Gravis could understand that, but he knew his father pretty well. His father was very fair towards everyone and kept himself out of most things. He wouldn't be interested in forcing something onto someone else or forcing them to do something. He let his children do whatever they wanted.

The woman noticed Gravis and looked surprised for a split-second. Then, her expression immediately morphed into a sweet smile. When Gravis saw that, his disgust grew. 'I hate hypocrisy,' he thought.

"You're the current center-child, right?" she asked with a sweet smile. "I wanted to meet you earlier, but I was too busy. I'm sorry," she said with a sad tone. "My name's Melody. What's yours?" she said with a smile, offering her hand.

Gravis still had his arms crossed. He looked at the offered hand for a second and then looked into Melody's eyes. "If you were actually interested in meeting me, you would know my name. You don't need to act like you care about me."

Melody had an offended expression on her face. "How rude!" she said in an offended tone. "You shouldn't talk like that to your big sister! It would help if you learned some manners, because, in the future, you won't be under father's protection anymore. At that time, saying things like this could get you into a lot of trouble!"

Gravis looked at her with a bored look. "As I said, you don't need to act like you give a shit. We have no connection between us, so my opinion doesn't have any influence over you," he said as he stepped away from the wall. Then, he slowly walked to the door leading into his father's room.

Melody looked offended again, but she quickly huffed and pulled her nose up. How dare this weakling talk to her like that? Didn't he know that she could kill him with merely a thought?

Yet, instead of talking more to Gravis, she shook her head and walked away. "Some people should really know their place," she said silently, knowing full well that Gravis could hear her.

Gravis didn't care about what Melody said. Her opinion had no relevance to him.

So, instead of answering, Gravis entered his father's room. Like previous times, his father sat in the same position.

"Are you finished dealing with your emotions?" his father asked as he opened his eyes.

Gravis nodded with a smile. "Yeah, I feel much better now," he said as he sat down in front of him.

His father nodded back. "Good, because I have bad news for you," he said.

Gravis' furrowed his brows.

"Yes?" he asked.

"One of your friends died some days ago," he said.

### [Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

#### **Chapter 359: Weak Body**

Gravis sighed and readied himself. He hadn't expected for one of his friends to die that quickly, but that had always been a possibility. "Who was it?"

"The one called Lasar," his father said.

Gravis took a deep breath. "How did he die?" he asked.

"Normal tempering," his father answered, "he underestimated the power of the weaker of his two opponents. After killing the stronger one, he had thought that the weaker one was easier to kill. The weaker opponent self-destructed, taking your friend with him."

Gravis looked to the side, at the windows, into the outside. "That was in the middle world, right?" he asked.

"Yes," his father answered, "he met up with that old man that you also consider your friend. That's something, at least."

Gravis took another deep breath. He was no longer running away from his pain. He felt the shock and grief inside him. He also remembered how he had met Lasar and how he had accepted Gravis back into the Lightning Sect.

They both stayed silent for a couple of minutes. Gravis was lost in thought, and the Opposer simply waited for him. Gravis had to deal with these things by himself.

"The others have also already reached the middle world?" Gravis asked after some minutes.

The Opposer nodded. "Every person you consider as a friend is in the middle world now."

Gravis had expected that already. He had been back home for nearly three weeks. With the time dilation, that would be over 50 years for the lower world.

"The lower world is still about the same?" Gravis asked.

"Nothing much changed except that there are many more people going through the tenth Stage of Energy Gathering," his father said.

Gravis had also anticipated that. The changes to the world would be very slow, except for the greater power of the Elemental Sects. With Heaven no longer killing people with a Will-Aura in the Body Tempering Realm, more powerful people would emerge.

Gravis remained silent for some more minutes, just thinking about his friends and the lower world. Over 50 years had passed in the lower world, giving Gravis a feeling of disconnect. The lower world was quickly changing while he had only talked to some people. The worlds were really different.

"So, about that surprise that Orpheus said," Gravis asked.

"What surprise?" his father asked.

"You didn't listen to our conversation?" Gravis asked back.

"No, why should I?" his father said. "That's your thing, and you're not in danger inside the city."

Gravis nodded. It made sense that his father didn't always listen in on his conversation or watch over him. He mostly did these things to protect him, and when it wasn't necessary, he wouldn't care. After all, listening to others talking for a long while would get boring eventually.

"Orpheus assumed that I would go to a Natural World next, but I said that I was more interested in a Battle World. Then, he referred me to you regarding that," Gravis said.

His father nodded and then looked Gravis in the eye. "If you want to continue cultivating, you have to go to a Natural World. There is no other way," he said.

Gravis lifted an eyebrow. "How come?"

"Your body," his father said as he pointed to Gravis. "It's too weak and not in sync with your lightning and Spirit. You've noticed that by now."

Gravis furrowed his brows. "Yes, I did. It feels like I am wasting my potential by having such a weak body, but what does it have to do with going to a Natural World? I'm sure there are some resources that I can get to let my body reach the same level as my other centers of power."

"No," his father said, surprising Gravis. "The difference is too vast, and you're already in the Unity Realm. All your centers of power are connected. By strengthening one, you involuntarily strengthen the other ones too, increasing your Realm in the process."

"Either you have to completely cut off the connection between your body and your other centers of power, losing your strongest weapon, or you will need to reach the peak of the Nascent Nourishing Realm. At that point, you could increase your physical power exclusively, but there is another problem."

Gravis still had furrowed brows. "Which is?"

"The higher your cultivation, the more synchronized your whole being becomes. Your whole being would have already gotten used to the current ratio of power. Increasing your physical strength at that point would be very challenging, costly, and time-consuming. There is a very high chance that you wouldn't be able to achieve it before your longevity runs out."

Gravis' eyes widened. "It would take that long?" he asked in shock.

The Opposer nodded. "I've taken your personality into account. Due to your drive, you have a slight possibility to achieve it before you die. Everyone else wouldn't even have that. On top of that, with the

uneven ratio, you wouldn't be able to make use of the greatest weapon of the Nascent Nourishing Realm. That would decrease your fighting strength tremendously."

"What is this weapon?" Gravis asked.

His father smirked. "I can't take away all the surprises. You'll naturally know when you reach that Realm or fight someone in it."

Gravis sighed. "Okay," he simply said, "and what does all of this have to do with going to a Natural World? I don't see how that would fix my situation."

"A Natural World doesn't have humans. It's simply a breeding ground for beasts that will function as tempering for humans later. Therefore, when you enter a Natural World, you won't be able to enter as a human."

Gravis raised an eyebrow. "Then how do I get there?" he asked.

"Your Spirit and lightning can go there, but your body can't," his father answered. "As soon as you enter, in order to accommodate the rules of the world, your body will dissolve while your Spirit and lightning will enter a fitting body."

Gravis scratched his chin in thought. "And since the bodies of beasts are way more powerful than humans, I would be able to deal with my issue?"

The Opposer nodded. "Exactly. Humans have the most powerful Energy and Spirit out of all living beings. Before you have reached the Unity Realm, you have tempered your Spirit and lightning to the strongest possible level. Therefore, you need a body that is equally the most powerful in its category."

Gravis sighed again. "That sounds like it would break the balance. Humans have the most powerful Energy and Spirit, while beasts have the most powerful bodies. Having both the advantages without the drawback sounds too good to be true. Heaven probably won't like it when I break its balance," Gravis said as he looked out of the window.

"What balance?" his father asked evenly.

"What do you mean with what balance?" Gravis asked back. "Heaven has created living beings like this, so it probably wanted to create some balance. Wouldn't breaking it make it act directly against me? I've killed a Heaven before, but I'm not so stupid that I would think that I would be able to survive against the highest Heaven."

The Opposer looked calmly at his son. "I think you have the whole concept of balance backwards," he said.

"What do you mean?" Gravis asked.

"The old bastard wants as many walking Energy attractors as possible. He could create only humans that attract the most Energy and no beasts, but then the humans would have to fight each other."

"He created the humans with weak bodies so that he could make fitting enemies that actually have a chance against humans. If the beasts were too weak, they wouldn't be able to function as tempering. Also, beasts require way less Energy than humans, so it's easier to produce them in massive numbers."

"The old bastard doesn't care about you having a stronger body. He might even want that. After all, his goal is to create as many powerful humans as possible. Additionally, by going to a Natural World, you won't kill any other humans during that time."

The Opposer looked at his son. "So, there is no such thing as an intended balance. There is no such thing as justice and equal chances for everyone. The more powerful you become, the better. The fewer humans you kill along the way, the better. The old bastard doesn't care that you have an advantage over beasts and humans. He only cares about you becoming powerful."

Gravis listened to his father and changed his thinking. Initially, he had believed that Heaven had created the current situation so that everyone was equal, but, apparently, he had been naïve. It was merely the most Energy efficient way to create powerful humans. Having a human abuse the system would only be a net-gain for Heaven, as long as the human didn't slaughter too many other humans.

By now, Gravis had accepted that he would go to a Natural World. His path was the most important thing, and he would keep advancing.

Yet, it felt kind of weird and melancholic to give up the body that had followed him all his life.

"You don't care that I won't share any blood with you anymore?" Gravis asked.

"No, why would I?" his father said. "Your Spirit is you. The body, Energy, lightning, and whatever else is just a weapon. As long as your Spirit remains, you are alive, and you are my son. Your Spirit is also what makes you a human, so, even if you have a beast body, you are still human."

Gravis closed his eyes and took a deep breath. He felt himself resonate with these words. Hadn't he always seen his body as a weapon?

"Also, you've only been in this body for a couple of months. Might as well change it again," his father said.

Gravis furrowed his brows. "What do you mean?"

"Remember the fifth trial in the Heaven's Trial? This is the body of your copy. Your old one has been left behind."

### [Lightning Is the Only Way](#)

#### **Chapter 360: Realms for the Middle World**

Gravis blinked a couple of times in surprise. "So, my original body is already gone?"

His father nodded.

"Huh," Gravis said, "this feels kind of weird. I don't really feel any different."

"Yes, because your body isn't you," his father said. "Same thing with a beast body. Didn't you say once that you are you, and that won't change, no matter how much you change?"

Gravis was a bit surprised about that. "I said that?" he asked.

"Yes, after you talked to some boy about the death of the other green bird," his father said.

Gravis scratched his chin in thought. That phrase actually sounded way too philosophical for his personality. Usually, he wasn't a fan of philosophical stuff since it didn't change reality. Apparently, his mind had been in a weird place at the time if he said something like that.

"I think you're right. It's weird having my own words thrown at me," Gravis said with a little bit of embarrassment.

"I thought it was a good phrase," his father said.

"Might be," Gravis answered. "By the way, what body will I enter?" Gravis asked.

"It depends on someone's path of cultivation," his father said. "You, obviously, have an affinity towards lightning, so you will enter a body that also has an affinity towards lightning. Lightning is a peculiar affinity in regards to beasts. It's rarer than the other elements."

"Additionally, most beasts with lightning affinity only get that later in their lives. Though, which body you enter depends on luck," his father said, "so, be prepared for a bad one."

Gravis sighed. "Luck again, huh?" he commented. "Then, wouldn't that be putting everything on one card? The body could be useless or unsuited for fighting."

"That only matters at the beginning," his father said, "you might not know, but the development of the body is not unchangeable."

Gravis raised an eyebrow. "Could you elaborate?" he asked.

"Most beasts follow their instincts when they reach a higher Realm. The instincts dictate which body they will choose. The important word is choose. They simply change the body into a form that is most comfortable and natural to them."

Gravis' eyes shone. "So, I can alter my body."

"Yes, but only when you reach a new Realm with it," his father said. "The alterations are also limited. Don't expect to immediately create a human body. If you want to return into a body similar to a human's, you would need several Realm increases."

"For example, you could get an additional pair of legs or arms after reaching a new Realm, but that is about as far as you can take it with only one breakthrough. Changing the outer layer of the body would also require a breakthrough."

Gravis thought about this for a while. "Why is the change so limited?"

"After you enter the body, it's your body. It's perfectly compatible with you. Your Spirit needs to acclimate to the body. Otherwise, it wouldn't be your body anymore. Only by slowly changing one part at a time can your body still be yours, even though it is completely different from your initial one."

"Hm, makes sense," Gravis commented. "I would also need to change my fighting style," he said.

"Depends on how you want to change your body," his father said. "If you aim for a humanoid body and enter the body of an ape, you could keep your current fighting style. Though, if you enter a body very different from a human's, it would take a long time to change it into one."

"With my luck, I will probably enter a snake or frog, something completely different to a human," Gravis said.

"The chances are high, yes," his father answered.

"By the way," Gravis said as he remembered something. "What happens if I enter a very weak body?" he asked.

"You would fall out of the Unity Realm. You would need to reestablish your Unity after your body has become powerful enough. Of course, reaching Unity will be easier than the first time," his father said.

Gravis furrowed his brows. "All my centers of power had been boosted quite significantly after I reached Unity. By falling out of Unity and regaining it, wouldn't my Spirit and Lightning become even more powerful?"

The Opposer shook his head. "Your Spirit and lightning don't need more of the waste that your body produces. They will stay the same while your body will rise to the same power as your other centers of power."

Gravis scratched his chin in thought. "This whole thing changes all my plans. Initially, I wanted to go to a middle world directly, but I'll probably need some preparation now."

The Opposer nodded. "Smart. You realized that you won't be able to fall back on human technology anymore."

"Yes. No pills, Formation Arrays, weapons, Cultivation Techniques, Battle Techniques, and similar things. This will need some getting used to," Gravis said with a sigh.

"Pills shouldn't be an issue," his father said. "You're past the part where pills are necessary. The lack of Formation Arrays is also more of an advantage than a disadvantage. After all, you never really used them. Like this, your enemies also won't have access to them."

Gravis nodded.

"Cultivation Techniques are useless to you anyway since your path is vastly different. Battle Techniques are nice, but as soon as you reach the Law Comprehension Realm, Battle Techniques are very specific anyway. Most cultivators just create their own at that point since everyone's comprehension is different."

Gravis raised an eyebrow. "Law Comprehension Realm?" he asked.

"That's the Realm after the Nascent Nourishing Realm," his father answered. "As its name suggests, that Realm is all about understanding the Laws and finding yourself with them. After that comes the Self Transformation Realm, also called the Immortal Realm."

"So, the Immortal Realm is the seventh one?" he asked.

His father nodded. "Yes. When you reach it, you will come back home. In order to become Immortal, you need to transform your body so that it can accommodate your Law."

Now, Gravis knew what he had to accomplish and what waited for him in the middle world. Yet, there was still one issue.

"The biggest issue is a weapon," Gravis said. "I might be able to use my new teeth and claws, but that's only an addition. A weapon allows me to have a further reach. On top of that, a weapon is generally harder than some teeth. With fitting Formation Arrays, it can also unleash incredible power."

His father nodded. "Yes. I would suggest learning how to smith. You should be able to get the basics down in about a year or so. At that time, you should be able to forge equipment for the Nascent Nourishing Realm."

Gravis raised an eyebrow. "That fast? I thought learning how to smith would take longer."

"Normally, it would, but you're different," his father said. "There are forging techniques that use lightning. With your high understanding and synchronicity with lightning, it won't be hard to control it finely enough. You only need to know the theory and do some basic practice."

Gravis nodded and fell back into thought. "But I don't think that I have enough resources to hire a teacher."

"Why would you need to hire a teacher?" his father asked evenly.

"Well, I can't just read books. It would be better if someone taught me," Gravis said.

"Gravis, you already know someone that can smith better than anyone else. You don't need to hire a teacher," his father said.

Gravis was a bit surprised. "You mean the best forger in the world, Linus? I've talked to him a couple of times, but I don't think that I'm that close to him."

"Gravis," his father said with a tiny bit of annoyance.

Gravis looked at his father.

The Opposer looked evenly at Gravis.